

### REMARKS

There remains pending in this application claims 1-5, of which claim 1 is independent.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above application is respectfully sought.

The invention as now set forth in independent claim 1 is directed to a sheet discharging apparatus which comprises a sheet discharging unit together with a charge eliminating member which is disposed on a downstream side of the sheet discharging unit and a sheet stacking unit, which is able to ascend and descend on which the sheet discharged by the sheet discharging unit is fed. The invention is characterized in that the charge eliminating member is disposed so that its tip portion is directed along the sheet discharging direction from the upstream side toward the downstream side of the sheet discharging unit and is contactable with an end of the sheet stacked on a sheet stacking unit.

The above features as now recited in independent claim 1 are supported at least by Figure 3 and the corresponding description in the specification.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, on grounds that they fail to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants have addressed this rejection by amending independent claim 1 to more clearly define the charge eliminating member 154 in the specification. Thus, as clearly shown in Figure 3 and Figure 6, for example, the tip portion of the charge eliminating member 154 is directed along the sheet discharging direction from an upstream side toward the downstream side of the sheet discharging direction and, as set forth at least on page 22, lines 10-13, the charge eliminating needle 154 has such a length that it

can touch the trailing edges of the sheets P stacked on the stack tray 128. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that as now set forth claim 1 is clearly supported by the specification and there is ample written description therein of a the claimed subject matter.

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Murakami et al. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

The invention as now recited in independent claim 1 features a sheet discharging apparatus with a charge eliminating member and is characterized in that the charge eliminating member is disposed so that a tip portion is directed along a sheet discharging direction from an upstream side toward a downstream side and is contactable with an end of the sheet stacked on the sheet stacking unit. The positioning of the charge eliminating member is illustrated, for example, at least in Figures 3, 4, and 6. As a result of this particular construction and design, the charge eliminating member as recited in claim 1 eliminates charge for the sheet twice, first at the time of discharging of the sheet and, second, at the time of the ascending or descending of the stacking tray. As a result, there is greater effectiveness of charge elimination.

Murakami et al. is directed to a sheet post-processing apparatus arranged within the main body of a copy machine. In the non-post-treating mode, the leading end portion of the sheet conveyed out from the conveying rollers 4,5 is led between the sheet discharging rollers 22,23 by the movable sheet guide 7, the guide being at the position of the non-post-treating mode, and the sheet is discharged onto the stacking tray 16. When in the post-treating mode, the leading end portion of the sheet is led toward the direction of the discharging opening 37 by the moveable sheet guide 7 which is at the position of the post-treating mode, and thus the

leading end portion falls on the staple tray 11. After the sheet is treated by the stapler 14, the sheet is discharged onto the stacking tray 16 via a pressing-operation by the pusher 15.

As illustrated, for example, in Figure 2, Murakami et al. does include a charge eliminating brush 10 which performs charge elimination processing for the sheet, but as noted previously, the charge eliminating brush 10 is oriented at a right angle to the path of the discharge sheet (see, Figure 2). However, and more significantly, in Murakami et al. the remover brush 10 performs its function of removing static electricity from the sheets without making contact with the sheets (see, column 12, lines 50-52). Thus, the charge eliminating member of Murakami et al. is not contactable with an end of a sheet stacked in the sheet stacking unit. Nor is it disposed with its tip portion directed along the sheet discharging direction from an upstream side toward the downstream side.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the invention as recited in independent claim 1 is clearly distinguishable from the sheet post-treating apparatus of Murakami et al.

The remaining claims in the above identified application are dependent claims which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are therefore patentable over the art of record for reasons noted above with respect to claim 1.

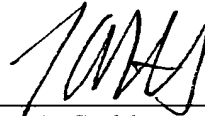
Applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment after final as it is being presented in an earnest effort to advance prosecution and to place the application in condition for allowance. Applicants believe the amendments to independent claim 1 and 2 address the rejection under § 112 and more clearly define the salient features of the invention, thereby

making entry of the amendment and passage to issue the most expeditious means of advancing prosecution.

Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding matters in this application have been addressed and that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the above application are respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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